

## House Republican Press Release

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### **Rep. Miller Calls for Mandatory DUI Sentences**



State Rep. Lawrence G. Miller, R-122, Stratford, Shelton, announced that he has proposed legislation requiring that repeat offenders of the state's laws on driving under the influence be required to serve at least 75 percent of their sentence.

"I am particularly concerned about drunk driving that results in the death of an innocent person," said Rep. Miller. "Connecticut drunk driving fatalities increased from 134 in 1999 to 158 in 2002 and continue to climb since then."

Rep. Miller noted that Connecticut is rated among the top 15 states in the nation over the past two years for fatal drunk driving incidents. In Connecticut 43.64 percent of traffic fatalities are alcohol related. In Stratford and Shelton, a number of alcohol related traffic accidents have resulted in loss of life, Rep. Miller said.

"We need to get repeat drunk drivers off the road, so that many of these lives could be saved," said Rep. Miller. "Unfortunately, this kind of carnage seems likely to continue unless courts in the state of Connecticut begin sending a clear, consistent signal to individuals who seem willing or unable to control their impulse to drink and drive."

Rep. Miller said, "We ought to look at the way courts are handling these cases as to see if there is a pattern of leniency or if cases are falling through the cracks."

Rep. Miller noted that drug abuse also contributes to fatal traffic accidents, and penalties should be strongly enforced for driving under the influence of drugs.

Published reports indicate that 10 percent of drunk driving cases, involving about 8,000 drivers, never even reach a hearing because of paperwork errors and other mistakes. Rep. Miller said the state Department of Motor Vehicles needs to do a better job in fighting drunk driving, as well as the court system.

Rep. Miller serves the 122<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District of Stratford and Shelton in the state House of Representatives.